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592 daughter; 4 his son and wife; 5 place reserved for animals. In this case, the half-sister has not transferred her share of land to her brother but rents it to him.

596 There is no institutionalized economic co-operation between the members of an extended family, if they are not living in one house. If they are on good terms, economic mututal assistance in borrowing money, animals, or crops may take place. Indeed it is significant that the extended family is not resorted to as much for economic help as has been expected. The economic strength of the extended family and the harmonious relationships between its members are not what is usually assumed by writers on social affairs in Egypt.[1]

However, the unity of the extended family is expected in questions related to public and formal occasions. The extended family is publicly responsible for the general conduct and certain disciplinary measures to redress the offences of its members against law and order, as we shall see later. Members of the extended family are also expected to render support to each other on occasions of offering hospitality, at circumcision, wedding [613] or funeral ceremonies. On the whole, the extended family could be regarded as an intermediate social unit between the conjugal economic family and the clan, shouldering the social responsibility for the smaller units and held accountable for their behaviour before the clan. It is only on the social level of public issues that public opinion in the village considers the family as a nucleus of blood relatives surrounded by a fringe of spouses.[2]

613 The extended families merge into the clan, and the village is composed
616 of nine clans (kabail), each tracing its descent in the patrilineal line to one common ancestor. Further, the nine clans are grouped in two main sections (hissa), each section belonging to a common progenitor, the two progenitors being brothers. One section is called 'Onab related to 'On, the brother of Mousa who is the progenitor of the Musiab section. The 'Onab section is divided into five clans, named: Diabab, Hasaballab, M'alliab, Waznab and Gharamab, whilst the Musiab is divided into four clans called: Marazik, 'Atamni, 'Amrab and Brahimab.[3]

616 It is locally accepted that each section represents half the population of the village, with the majority of the Musiab having their residence in the northern part, while the majority of the 'Onab reside mainly in the southern part. Between the two sections there is complete freedom of intermarriage

[1] The writer is under the impression, from his general observation, that the extended family seems to be stronger and more effective as an economic unit amongst big landowning families as distinct from what obtains in Silwa, a community of small landowners.

[2] Ralph Linton, *The Study of Man*, p. 159.

[3] Ab, the termination of the names of these clans, according to C. G. Seligman and Brenda Seligman, cannot be the Arabic ab—father. The suffix is common among the Beja tribal names. 'The Kababish, a Sudan Arab Tribe', *Harvard African Studies*, Vol. II, 1918, footnote, p. 113.

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and social exchange. Each of the two sections is supposed to be characterized by certain attributes; the Musiab being renowned for their boasting and self-pride, and heavy-built members, while the 'On-ab are reputed to be comparatively stingy and much inclined to gossip. 616

There are no formal heads of clans but there are natural leaders who are spontaneously appointed on occasions from the oldest members. The distinctive hallmark of every clan is its guest house, where the adult members of the clan have their communal meals during the fasting month of Ramadan, receive a common guest, settle disputes, meet for ordinary gossip and can celebrate their feasts, ceremonies and funerals. On one hand, the clans are aware of their integral identity; and on the other hand, they are aware that they are linked together by a common ancestor forming the unity of the village. 613

Silwa Kibli (Southern Silwa) and its neighbouring villages are inhabited by the descendants of 'Ayyash the third brother of 'On and Musa. This genealogical relationship is the explanation given to the similarities in customs and traditions between the two parts of Silwa Kibli and Silwa Bahari. 619 63 184 [829]

The genealogical pattern goes on to repeat itself still further to include and explain the relations and similarities in the larger socio-geographic region extending throughout the whole province. Apart from the towns 'where people are mixed', most of the villages of this region are inhabited by either the G'afra or 'Ababda. While the G'afra are the descendants of G'afar al-Sadik whose great-grandfather was the grandson of the Prophet, the 'Ababda are the descendants of 'Abdullah ibn al-Zubair who belonged to the Kuraish clan, the Prophet's clan, but was not so close in kinship or favour to the Prophet. The G'afra consider themselves more hospitable than the 'Ababda; and they are also distinguishable as farmers, while the 'Ababda, even if they are farmers at present, were originally camel-drivers.

Moreover the G'afra region is divided into two parts: those villages lying along the eastern bank of the Nile are descendants of Bahr (amongst whose sons were 'On, Musa and 'Ayyash), while those stretching along the western bank of the Nile are the descendants of Buhair, the brother of Bahr. The diagram overleaf represents the ramification of kinship in the region of G'afra and Silwa. [361]

It is clear from this that not only the village, but the whole region represents a ramified genealogical tree, having one main trunk. It is also significant that this ramification is related to the branching off of brothers who were not in agreement, e.g. in the division of East and West in the whole region, in the division of the two parts of Silwa (South and North) and in the division of Silwa itself into two sections. This could be taken as a recognition of a deep-seated cultural expectation of brothers' discord, in spite of the highly idealized expectation of fraternal solidarity. [593]

The genealogical pattern, based on the unilateral descent, repeats itself

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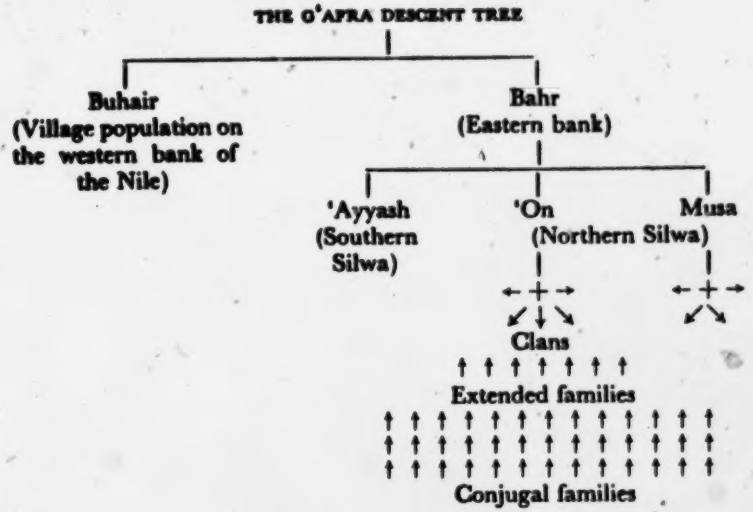
The genealogical pattern, based on the unilateral descent, repeats itself with diminishing range throughout the social structure of the village down to the smallest unit. The village is divided into two parts, each of which is subdivided into clans, and these in turn are composed of a number of extended families.[1] The whole structure of the village, as well as that of the whole socio-geographic region of G'afra, could be likened to a centrifugal mechanism spreading out and out in ever-widening circles. Certain common structural norms of behaviour permeate the various segments of the centrifugal structure, manifesting themselves in varying degrees and in different circumstances.[2]



Pride of belonging to a particular family, especially more obvious in the circle of the extended family, reflects itself in one's pride in the clan, the section, the village, and in the holy descent of the G'afra stock. In the case of extended families, pride manifests itself in possessing a common horse which runs in races held on the celebration of saintly occasions, in having a name for hospitality, or for scholarship and piety. Pride of clan is linked with activities in the guest house, or co-operation in digging a well. Pride in one's section is revealed on communal celebrations especially during the celebration of the Prophet's birthday; each section proclaiming that it has carried it out in a more spectacular manner as each usually has its 'marquee' for listening to the recital of Koran and mawals (popular songs). At the level of the G'afra as such, the sense of pride reveals itself in their holy

[1] See Nadel, 'Beni-Amer. Society', *Sudan Notes and Records*, Vol. XXVI, pp. 1, 44.

[2] The word 'structural' here is used in the sense employed by Bateson to denote standardised details of behaviour. *Naven*, p. 23.

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should be declined by saying, 'God compensates me in a better way'.

The following three instances are concrete situations showing the working of the social structure. The first is the installation of a new corn mill by all the clans in the village to bring to an end the monopoly of the already existing privately owned mill. The rough estimates were divided into 24 kirats (parts), each section responsible for collecting the money equivalent to its 12 kirats.[1] In the second process of distribution, each section divides its share amongst the clans, and the head of each clan is responsible for collecting his share from family heads; by dividing his kirats into sahms, the people of his clan could buy a minimum of one-tenth of a sahm. No section or clan could be helped or its shares be taken by another. It was interesting to listen to the village crier calling out the names of the clans and the two sections, to induce haste in collecting the money.

Such procedure was followed for repairing the village mosque. In this case the question was not so much that of collecting money, as of recruiting the men to bring stone, water, straw, etc., for the repairs; and this was also dealt with on the same structural basis.

The third instance was the allocation of new building land to the village, which was also first divided into two sections; then each section was divided into equal parts amongst its clans, which in turn had to divide its share among the families.

The system of village government reflects a combination of central authority agents and the village social organization. The village head is an official called 'Omda' who used to be elected from a list of five people who own not less than 10 feddans. Two years ago, the law was changed and the Omda is now elected from amongst thirteen people who own enough land to make them eligible. The job is unpaid, and it is reckoned as a privilege to be elected. The Omda's seniority is something like the medieval *primus inter pares*. He represents the village on official occasions. One of his traditional and honorary functions is to receive guests, travellers, and government officials in his guest house. Silwa has also two unpaid 'Sheikhs' each representing one of the two sections of the village and thus commonly referred to as 'Sheikh hissa'; these are also elected from amongst those who are eligible (minimum requirement was 5 feddans, now being relaxed). The Omda and the two sheikhs settle the disputes that arise in the village, usually with the aid of Arab councils, or with the help of people whom they select on different occasions. Each sheikh is primarily concerned with the problems of his section (hissa).

The central government is represented by the police headquarters with a police officer or constable in charge and policemen and ghafeers. While the policemen are always from outside the village, the ghafeers are villagers, put up usually from different clans, acting as the Omda's messengers, as well as the local agents between the village and the police headquarters.

[1] The feddan has 24 kirats, and each kirat 12 sahms.